

# Obama Confronts Racial Division

## Urges nation to break from past

(AP) -- Barack Obama confronted the nation's racial divide head-on Tuesday, tackling both black grievance and white resentment in a bold effort to quiet a campaign uproar over race and his former pastor's incendiary statements.

Obama urged the nation to break "a racial stalemate we've been stuck in for years."

"The anger is real," he said. "It is powerful, and to simply wish it away, to condemn it without understanding its roots, only serves to widen the chasm of misunderstanding that exists between the races."

The speech, delivered in Philadelphia near the building where the Declaration of Independence was adopted, was by far the most prominent airing of racial issues in Obama's 13-month campaign to become the first black president.

He said he recognized his race has been a major issue in a campaign that has taken a "particularly divisive turn." Many people



Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama D-Ill., speaks about race during a news conference Tuesday in Philadelphia. (AP photo)

have been turning to the Internet to view statements by his longtime pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, who suggested in one sermon that the United States brought the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on itself and in another said blacks should damn America for continuing to mistreat them.

Obama rejected Wright's divisive statements but still embraced the man who

brought him to Christianity, officiated at his wedding, baptized his two daughters and inspired the title of his book "The Audacity of Hope."

"I can no more disown him than I can disown the black community," Obama said. "I can no more disown him than I can my white grandmother—a woman who helped raise me, a woman who sacrificed again and again for me, a woman who loves me as much as she loves anything in this world, but a woman who once confessed her fear of black men who passed by her on the street, and who on more than one occasion has uttered racial or ethnic stereotypes that made me cringe."

Obama's father is a black man from Kenya who left the family when he was 2. He was raised by his white mother and her parents in Hawaii.

Hillary Rodham Clinton, Obama's chief Democratic rival, said she was glad Obama had given the speech.

"Issues of race and gender in America have been complicated throughout our history, and they are complicated in this primary campaign," said Clinton, also campaigning in Philadelphia. "There have been

detours and pitfalls along the way, but we should remember that this is a historic moment for the Democratic Party and for our country. We will be nominating the first African-American or woman for the presidency of the United States, and that is something that all Americans can and should celebrate."

Obama said he came to Wright's church, Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, nearly 20 years ago because he was inspired by the pastor's message of hope and his inspiration to rebuild the black community. He also said black anger persists over injustice in America, and whites shouldn't be surprised that it bursts out in sermons.

"The fact that so many people are surprised to hear that anger in some of Reverend Wright's sermons simply reminds us of the old truism that the most segregated hour in American life occurs on Sunday morning," he said.

Obama said it's not just blacks who are angry — some whites are, too, because they feel blacks are often given an unfair advantage through affirmative action.

## Candidate to Visit Portland on Friday

(AP) -- Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama will make a campaign swing through Oregon this week.

Nick Shapiro, a spokesman for the Obama campaign in Oregon, said the Illinois senator will likely arrive on Friday and leave on Saturday. A Portland appearance on Friday morning is definite, Shapiro said.

Other sources close to the campaign said Obama may also appear in Salem, Corvallis, Eugene and Medford, but there were no other details at press time Tuesday.

Obama collected about \$200,000 during a Portland fundraiser and rally in September. His rival, New York Sen. Hillary Clinton, hasn't yet been to Oregon during her presidential campaign.

Ballots for the mail-in primary go out in six weeks. The results are tallied on May 20.

## Police Issues Draw Fire in Debate

continued from Front

ting control of unions." Referring to Adams' comment he said, "I'm not impressed with the City Council at all." Repeating a recurrent theme, he said individuals should be trained to defend their rights and not expect government to do it.

For the most part, the candidates pressed their own, sometimes conflicting positions. At several points the other challengers directed criticism at Adams, who as city commissioner is the only elected official in the race.

For instance Dozono, owner of Azumano Travel Agency and a prominent member of several civic organizations criticized Adams for not using a \$32 million tax surplus to create a Rainy Day Fund in last year's budget.

Rich, a self-employed entrepreneur in the advertising and entertainment promotion fields, declared, "The city has the money" to deal with priorities if it wasn't diverted to "pet projects and personal legacies," such as the Oregon Health and Sciences University's \$57 million tram and new streetcar routes, which Adams has personally advocated for.

Gier, a panel chip engineer, made similar charges.

Adams replied that he too believed in a rainy day fund, but that the city also had to "backfill" loss of funds due to cuts in fed-

eral appropriations. The newest streetcar additions are being paid for by federal appropriations, urban renewal funds and local assessments that couldn't otherwise be used for police, fire or schools, he said.

One questioner asked what the candidates would do to ensure that the African American community is included in the city's vision.

Adams, who lives in Kenton, responded, "I experience north Portland as a member of the community. This is an incredible community, but it's incredibly stressed." He promised to sit down with "leaders of the African American community, the north-northeast community, and create a plan."

Dozono said, "I have so many friends in the audience," and mentioned James Posey, Roy Jay and Lorenzo Poe. "These are people I've worked with for 30 years. I've been in your community; I've been invited into your homes. You have my commitment. Being a person of color means a lot to me."

Several times Dozono repeated, "I get it, and I'll get it done." In his final remark, in an obvious reference to the fact that he was running for office for the first time, he said, "I'm ready for prime time."

McNair said, "I want to close the gap on this community. White folks don't understand us, and

African Americans feel threatened."

She said she would urge more affluent neighborhoods to help less well-off ones. "I want things to be equal and fair," she said. "I want to shake up City Hall."

Rich said that he was familiar with many rap artists from his time in the music business, and would work to eradicate Oregon Liquor Control Commission laws that restrict what they do. He said he would emphasize personal responsibility for problem solving with "a hand up, not a hand out."

Gier, noting that he was the youngest candidate, said, "In a short time I've done a lot. I will be the most honest person you've ever elected. My door will be open and my books will be open. Everyone will know what I'm thinking."

In answer to a question about changing to a city manager form of government Dozono, who backed two unsuccessful attempts to institute such a system, continued to defend the concept, but added, "I won't run on a platform of charter change."

Adams said the idea would confer "near-dictatorial powers" upon one person and said, "I opposed what Sho and Mayor Potter proposed." The other three candidates agreed, although Rich said, "What's the difference between one person who's a dictator and a group of people who act like a dictator?"

"My goal is to be an electronics technician."

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